# City of Seattle

**Department of Planning & Development**
D. M. Sugimura, Director

DESIGN REVIEW

**FIRST EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE NORTHWEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**

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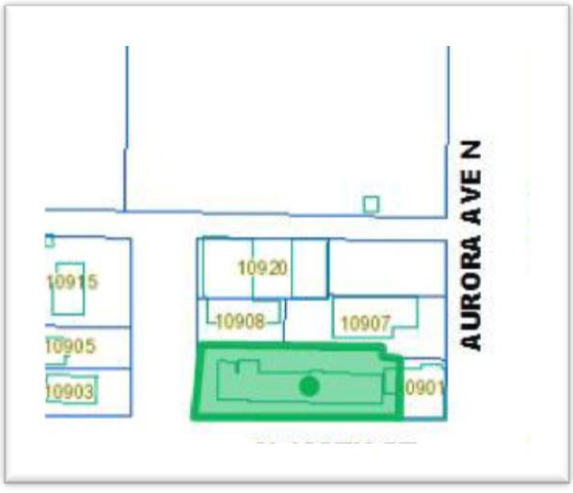
| Project Number: | 3017565 |
| Address: | 1008 N. 109th Street |
| Applicant: | Robin Murphy, Stricker Cato Murphy Architects |
| Date of Meeting: | Monday, November 24, 2014 |
| Board Members Present: | Marc Angelillo<br>Ellen Cecil (Chair)<br>Jerry Coburn<br>Dale Kutzera |
| Board Members Absent: | David Nieman |
| DPD Staff Present: | Michael Dorcy |

**SITE & VICINITY**

Site Zone: Commercial 1-40’

Nearby Zones: (North) C1-40
(South) C1-40, LR2
(East) C1-40
(West) SF 5000

Lot Area: 14,107 sf



**Current Development:**

The site faces onto N. 109th Street and is located just west of Aurora Avenue N. (just to the west of Rose Corner Flower Shop) , extending west to Whitman Avenue N. The site is now an earthen berm and provides a resting place for soil storage and other detritus. The street edges of the site are without gutter, planting strip or sidewalks.

**Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:**

The site is located within the Aurora/Licton Springs Urban Village. One block to the north, either side of Aurora Avenue N. is fronted by divisions of Washelli Cemetery. South of the cemetery, running along either side of Aurora there is a strip of C1-40 zoning, varying between a half and a full block in width. West of Whitman Avenue N. which abuts the subject site on the west there is a generally large swath of single family zoning developed with single-family dwellings. Lower commercial buildings and some warehouse structures are aligned along the Aurora corridor. Some multi-family structures of more recent vintage are intermingled with older single family houses across N. 109th Street and south of the site.

**Access:**

Access to the site is available from both N. 109th and Whitman Avenue N.

**Environmentally Critical Areas:**

There are no ECA's on the site.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The applicant proposes a mixed-use structure with some retail and office space at grade, 12 live/work units and 93 studio apartments in a four-story building of either site built or modular construction.

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The packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3017565) at this website: http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design_Review_Program/Project_Reviews/Reports/default.asp.

The packet is also available to view in the file, by contacting the Public Resource Center at DPD:

**Mailing Address:** **Public Resource Center**
700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000
P.O. Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

**Email:** PRC@seattle.gov

**DESIGN DEVELOPMENT**

The preferred option, Option 1, would be a four-story structure with a site built ground floor containing a lobby, small retail space, 13 live/work units, and parking for 14 vehicles underlying 3 stories of modular, stacked units, containing a total of 93 residential units. An amenity area would be provided on the top of the ground floor office space. This configuration would require departures to allow less than the required depth to the live/work units in order to provide for the parking. Option 2, site built, would provide no parking, allowing for the required depth of the live/work units and providing for amenity space along the entire length of the structure at the second level. Option two would require no departures. Option 3, like the first option, would be modular built above the base, provide 14 parking spaces and amenity space at the second level in the northeast sector of the building. Option 3 would require departures to allow less than the prescribed depth for the live/work units.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Concerns regarding the disappearance of curbside parking; the buildings, in whatever options, were out-of-scale with existing conditions; there would be potential conflicts between the proposed amenity areas and the dog daycare facility north of the building—visual barriers should be added to the proposed deck areas.

**PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS**

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Board members provided the following siting and design guidance.

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The Board voiced the following concerns:

- None of the options really addressed the transition to the SF 5000 zone and the scale of the single-family homes to the west across Whitman Avenue N
- The options generally lacked modulated facades and proposed aa pastiche of painted divisions instead of actual modulation
- None of the proposed west-facing facades appeared to address the zone change at Whitman Avenue N. and the single-family structures across the street
- It was unclear how the so-called amenity areas proposed would actually function as “amenities”
- It was not clear how the live/work spaces were intended to work and function as live/work spaces

**DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES**

The priority Citywide and Neighborhood guidelines identified by the Board as Priority Guidelines are summarized below, with the note that a second Early Design Guidance meeting could well give further priority and focus to the guidelines particularly important to the success of the project. For the full text please visit the Design Review website.

## CONTEXT & SITE

**CS2 Urban Pattern and Form: Strengthen the most desirable forms, characteristics, and patterns of the streets, block faces, and open spaces in the surrounding area.**

**CS2-D Height, Bulk, and Scale**

**CS2-D-1. Existing Development and Zoning:** Review the height, bulk, and scale of neighboring buildings as well as the scale of development anticipated by zoning for the area to determine an appropriate complement and/or transition.

**CS2-D-2. Existing Site Features:** Use changes in topography, site shape, and vegetation or structures to help make a successful fit with adjacent properties.

**CS2-D-3. Zone Transitions:** For projects located at the edge of different zones, provide an appropriate transition or complement to the adjacent zone(s). Projects should create a step in perceived height, bulk and scale between the anticipated development potential of the adjacent zone and the proposed development.

**CS2-D-4. Massing Choices:** Strive for a successful transition between zones where a project abuts a less intense zone.

**CS2-D-5. Respect for Adjacent Sites:** Respect adjacent properties with design and site planning to minimize disrupting the privacy of residents in adjacent buildings.

**CS3 Architectural Context and Character: Contribute to the architectural character of the neighborhood.**

**CS3-A Emphasizing Positive Neighborhood Attributes**

**CS3-A-4. Evolving Neighborhoods:** In neighborhoods where architectural character is evolving or otherwise in transition, explore ways for new development to establish a positive and desirable context for others to build upon in the future.

## PUBLIC LIFE

**PL2 Walkability: Create a safe and comfortable walking environment that is easy to navigate and well-connected to existing pedestrian walkways and features.**

**PL2-A Accessibility**

**PL2-A-1. Access for All:** Provide access for people of all abilities in a manner that is fully integrated into the project design. Design entries and other primary access points such that all visitors can be greeted and welcomed through the front door.

**PL2-B Safety and Security**

**PL2-B-2. Lighting for Safety:** Provide lighting at sufficient lumen intensities and scales, including pathway illumination, pedestrian and entry lighting, and/or security lights.

**PL2-B-3. Street-Level Transparency:** Ensure transparency of street-level uses (for uses such as nonresidential uses or residential lobbies), where appropriate, by keeping views open into spaces behind walls or plantings, at corners, or along narrow passageways.

**PL2-C Weather Protection**

**PL2-**

**PL2-C-2. Design Integration:** Integrate weather protection, gutters and downspouts into the design of the structure as a whole, and ensure that it also relates well to neighboring buildings in design, coverage, or other features.

**PL3 Street-Level Interaction: Encourage human interaction and activity at the street-level with clear connections to building entries and edges.**

**PL3-A Entries**

**PL3-A-4. Ensemble of Elements:** Design the entry as a collection of coordinated elements including the door(s), overhead features, ground surface, landscaping, lighting, and other features.

**PL3-B Residential Edges**

**PL3-B-3. Buildings with Live/Work Uses:** Maintain active and transparent facades in the design of live/work residences. Design the first floor so it can be adapted to other commercial use as needed in the future.

**PL4-B-2. Bike Facilities:** Facilities such as bike racks and storage, bike share stations, shower facilities and lockers for bicyclists should be located to maximize convenience, security, and safety.

**PL4-B-3. Bike Connections:** Facilitate connections to bicycle trails and infrastructure around and beyond the project.

## DESIGN CONCEPT

**DC1 Project Uses and Activities: Optimize the arrangement of uses and activities on site.**

**DC1-A Arrangement of Interior Uses**

**DC1-A-2. Gathering Places:** Maximize the use of any interior or exterior gathering spaces.

**DC1-B Vehicular Access and Circulation**

**DC1-B-1. Access Location and Design:** Choose locations for vehicular access, service uses, and delivery areas that minimize conflict between vehicles and non-motorists wherever possible. Emphasize use of the sidewalk for pedestrians, and create safe and attractive conditions for pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers.

**DC1-C Parking and Service Uses**

**DC1-C-2. Visual Impacts:** Reduce the visual impacts of parking lots, parking structures, entrances, and related signs and equipment as much as possible.

**DC2 Architectural Concept: Develop an architectural concept that will result in a unified and functional design that fits well on the site and within its surroundings.**

**DC2-A Massing**

**DC2-A-2. Reducing Perceived Mass:** Use secondary architectural elements to reduce the perceived mass of larger projects.

**DC2-B Architectural and Facade Composition**

**DC2-B-1. Façade Composition:** Design all building facades—including alleys and visible roofs— considering the composition and architectural expression of the building as a whole. Ensure that all facades are attractive and well-proportioned.

**DC2-C Secondary Architectural Features**

**DC2-C-1. Visual Depth and Interest:** Add depth to facades where appropriate by incorporating balconies, canopies, awnings, decks, or other secondary elements into the façade design. Add detailing at the street level in order to create interest for the pedestrian and encourage active street life and window shopping (in retail areas).

**DC3 Open Space Concept: Integrate open space design with the building design so that they complement each other.**

**DC3-A Building-Open Space Relationship**

**DC3-A-1. Interior/Exterior Fit:** Develop an open space concept in conjunction with the architectural concept to ensure that interior and exterior spaces relate well to each other and support the functions of the development.

**DC3-B Open Space Uses and Activities**

**DC3-B-1. Meeting User Needs:** Plan the size, uses, activities, and features of each open space to meet the needs of expected users, ensuring each space has a purpose and function.

**DC3-B-4. Multifamily Open Space:** Design common and private open spaces in multifamily projects for use by all residents to encourage physical activity and social interaction.

**DC3-C Design**

**DC3-C-1. Reinforce Existing Open Space:** Where a strong open space concept exists in the neighborhood, reinforce existing character and patterns of street tree planting, buffers or treatment of topographic changes. Where no strong patterns exist, initiate a strong open space concept that other projects can build upon in the future.

**DC3-C-2. Amenities/Features:** Create attractive outdoor spaces suited to the uses envisioned for the project.

**DC3-C-3. Support Natural Areas:** Create an open space design that retains and enhances onsite natural areas and connects to natural areas that may exist off-site and may provide habitat for wildlife.

**DC4 Exterior Elements and Finishes: Use appropriate and high quality elements and finishes for the building and its open spaces.**

**DC4-A Exterior Elements and Finishes**

**DC4-A-1. Exterior Finish Materials:** Building exteriors should be constructed of durable and maintainable materials that are attractive even when viewed up close. Materials that have texture, pattern, or lend themselves to a high quality of detailing are encouraged.

**DC4-A-2. Climate Appropriateness:** Select durable and attractive materials that will age well in Seattle's climate, taking special care to detail corners, edges, and transitions.

**DC4-C-1. Functions:** Use lighting both to increase site safety in all locations used by pedestrians and to highlight architectural or landscape details and features such as entries, signs, canopies, plantings, and art.

**DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES**

The Board's recommendation on the requested departure(s) will be based on the departure's potential to help the project better meet these design guidelines priorities and achieve a better overall project design than could be achieved without the departure(s). The Board's recommendation will be reserved until the final Board meeting.

At the time of the FIRST Early Design Guidance meeting the following departures were requested:

1. **SMC 23.47A.008 :** The Code requires an average depth of 30 feet and a minimum depth of 15 feet for non-residential street-level uses. The applicant proposes a reduction in minimum and average depths.

The Board indicated they would reserve any recommendation until at a second EDG meeting the applicant would more clearly demonstrate the disposition and functioning of the units and clearly articulate the request as better meeting the intention of the Design Guidelines.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- **Show and explain how the proposed amenity areas function as true amenity areas. Show the choice of location of these spaces as optimizations among options.**
- **Show and explain how the building form addresses concerns regarding height, bulk and scale relations to the single-family zone to the west across Whitman Avenue N.**
- **Explore moving the ground level of the proposed structures to the north property line.**
- **Show and explain how the proposed structure puts a best face toward the single family residential structures to the west.**
- **Explain the function and performance of the live/work units and clearly show how requested departures in their regards better meet the intentions of the Design Guidelines.**
- **Explore how a better degree of actual modulation might be achieved in the proposed use of modular structures**

**BOARD DIRECTION**

At the conclusion of the FIRST EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE meeting, the Board recommended the project return for another meeting in response to the guidance provided.